



Forestry and
Land Scotland
Coilltearachd agus
Fearann Alba

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy 2025-26



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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1. Policy statement

Forestry and Land Scotland is committed to ensuring a safe and healthy workplace for all employees, contractors, those who work with us and visitors to Scotland's National forests and land. In line with our commitment to continuous improvement, our Health and Safety Policy matches ISO 45001 requirements. We strive to achieve and maintain a safe, healthy, and sustainable working environment that protects our workforce and minimises occupational risks. We aim to achieve this through the following commitments:

1.1 Compliance with legal requirements and standards

We ensure compliance with relevant health and safety laws and regulations to maintain a safe and healthy working environment. We are developing ISO 45001 standard policies and procedures to ensure national and international quality standards are met.

1.2 Workforce involvement

Our workforce is our most valuable asset, and their involvement in health and safety is critical. Our employees and trade unions are involved in developing and implementing health, safety and wellbeing procedures, assessing risks, identifying hazards, and improving the working environment to reduce occupational and other risks.

1.3. Protecting our workforce

Safety is our top priority. We identify, assess, and minimise hazards through risk analysis and implement effective risk control measures. We also ensure that our employees are appropriately trained and competent in safety procedures and, where necessary, use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). We will provide suitable supervision, coaching and mentoring to our employees. We carry out regular health screenings to evaluate our employees' health status to reduce the risks of occupational illnesses.

1.4 Physical and mental wellbeing

FLS provides compassionate, inclusive leadership in relation to the wellbeing of our people, with a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment and discrimination. We understand that ensuring wellbeing and creating a diverse and inclusive culture are integrally linked. Taking an evidence-based approach, we will promote a healthy work culture that increases understanding of psychological and physical safety, enabling our workforce to thrive and perform effectively. It is well recognised that people are at their most productive when healthy, happy, and included.

1.5 Continual improvement

We continuously monitor and review our health and safety systems to ensure they are effective, following the Plan, Do, Check Act system. We conduct regular internal audits to identify areas for improvement and implement corrective action plans. We also encourage open communication to ensure that everyone stays informed on our health and safety policies and procedures.

Forestry and Land Scotland is committed to providing an environment that fosters a safety-first culture through the integration of safe procedures, employee involvement and continuous improvement while ensuring our operations meet all legal requirements.

2. Arrangements for health, safety and wellbeing

To ensure we deliver this policy, the following arrangements have been established:

2.1 Risk management

We will conduct risk assessments for all activities and operations, taking into account potential hazards and associated risks. This includes identifying physical, psychological, and environmental hazards that may impact the wellbeing of individuals. Control measures will be identified and implemented to mitigate and manage these risks effectively. Training is provided to staff on risk assessment and we run monthly webinars which are open to all staff to discuss risk assessment and access expert support.

2.2 Mental and physical health: prevention, promotion and support

Wellbeing is all of our responsibility. We all have a role to play in prevention, promotion and support of our own wellbeing and that of others. Our approach will focus on three areas:

Preventative: We will work with all parts of the business to understand and embed a consistent, sustainable, and integrated approach to wellbeing and inclusion, as a core part of our culture.

Promotion: This includes providing resources, information, and training on a range of well-being areas, such as stress management, mental health awareness, work-life balance, and ergonomic practices.

Support: We have structures and tools in place that provide both proactive and reactive support to individuals and teams, such as Mental Health First Aiders across FLS; an Employee Assistance Programme, stress risk assessments and wellness action plans. We also work with a range of external partners to provide additional support.

2.3 Competent health, safety and wellbeing advice:

Competent health, safety and wellbeing advice will be provided by FLS's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team who provide specialist support across the agency. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Managers and Advisors will be suitably trained, qualified and experienced to carry out their roles. All Health and Safety Managers and Advisors will be qualified to, or working towards, NEBOSH Diplomas in Occupational Safety and Health or equivalent qualifications.

2.4 Employee engagement and consultation:

We actively engage employees in decision-making processes related to health, safety, and well-being. We have established a framework of Health Safety and Wellbeing forums across FLS which facilitate open dialogue and feed into the National FLS Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee. We also value our partnership with our trade union colleagues who are represented at the national committee and forums across FLS. We are committed to regular communication with employees to ensure their voices and perspectives are heard and considered in the development and improvement of policies and practices.

2.5 Work-life balance:

We promote work-life balance by offering flexible working arrangements whenever feasible, balancing business, team and individual needs. This may include flexible working hours, hybrid working and opportunities for career development and growth. We encourage employees to utilise these arrangements to enhance their overall well-being.

2.6 Health and safety training

We provide a range of health and safety training that encompasses not only physical safety but also psychological well-being. Training sessions are conducted to ensure employees are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain their well-being at work. We have a well-resourced Learning and Development Team who are committed to ensuring that staff are provided with the appropriate mandatory and developmental training.

2.7 Incident reporting and investigation

We maintain a robust accident, incident and near miss reporting system (AIRS) that encourages employees to promptly report any health, safety, or well-being concerns or incidents. Incidents are thoroughly investigated in line with our Accident and Incident Standard Operating Procedure and appropriate corrective actions are implemented to prevent their recurrence. Confidentiality and fairness are prioritised in the reporting and investigative process. Our performance on the reporting of near misses is a corporate Key Performance Indicator.

2.8 Continual improvement

We continuously review our health, safety, and well-being policies and arrangements to ensure their effectiveness in promoting a safe and healthy work environment. This includes monitoring trends, reviewing feedback, and staying updated on relevant legislation and industry best practices. We strive for ongoing improvement in our practices and approaches to sustain and enhance employee well-being

2.9 Provision and maintenance of work equipment

We comply with our responsibilities under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (1998) by ensuring we implement positive purchasing policies either through national procurement of equipment led by our Mechanical Engineering Service (MES) or Regionally under the control of line managers. Equipment is maintained in a safe condition by MES or by external bodies. Work equipment is maintained in an efficient state, in efficient order and in good repair by means of:

- Ensuring before-use checks and scheduled maintenance is carried out by the operator.
- Ensuring completion of operator machinery maintenance logs.
- Ensuring there is an effective fault reporting and fleet management system in place.
- Ensuring planned maintenance and inspection of equipment is completed in accordance with service and statutory regulations by line Managers / competent persons, MES and external bodies.
- Ensuring maintenance operations on work equipment can be carried out safely.

2.10 Buildings

Responsibility for ensuring that all statutory compliance is met across our buildings, ranging from fire systems maintenance, fixed wiring, biomass, HVAC, asbestos, water hygiene, private water supplies, abstractions and discharge consents etc lies with the Fleet and Buildings Team in Net Zero Directorate.

Day to day responsibilities for building safety are allocated to building occupiers and identified locally taking into consideration the specific usage of the building and how those buildings are occupied. Responsibility for fire safety is covered in FLS's Fire Policy.

3. Roles and responsibilities

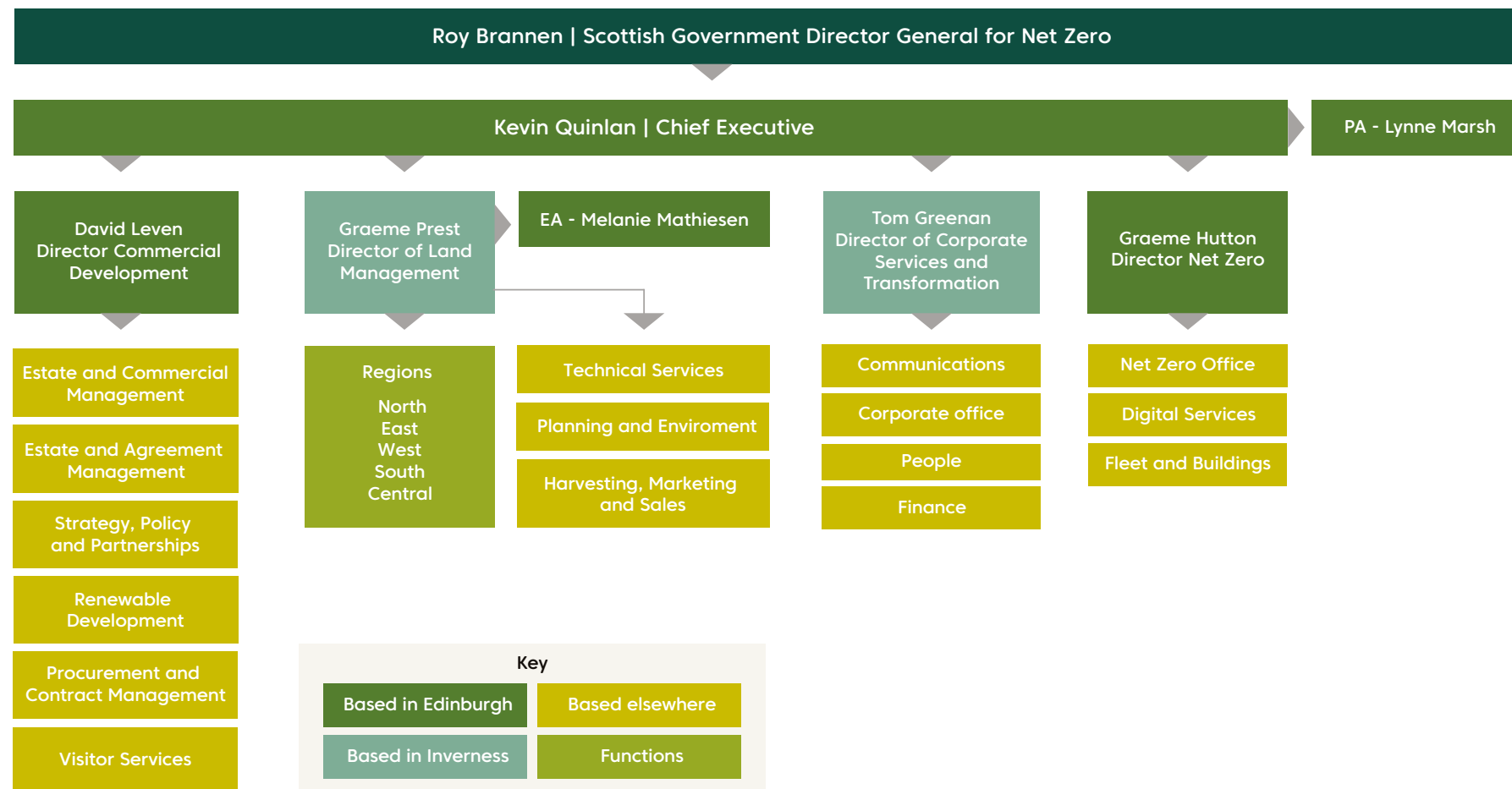
All employees have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety, as well as that of colleagues and others who may be affected by their actions or omissions. They must cooperate with their employer by following health and safety policies, instructions and risk assessments, by using equipment correctly, and reporting hazards, accidents, or unsafe practices to ensure a safe working environment. Health and safety responsibilities for individual role across FLS are published on our intranet.

Accountability for the effective management of health, safety and wellbeing in FLS rests with Kevin Quinlan, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) FLS and the FLS Executive Leadership Team. The FLS Executive Leadership Team (ELT) has appointed Graeme Prest, Director of Land Management and Regions, as Director of Safety.

Members of the ELT are collectively responsible for providing health, safety and wellbeing leadership. Members of the ELT are also accountable for all aspects of health, safety and wellbeing in their area.

The Director of Safety is responsible and for the advocacy, promotion and visibility of workplace health, safety and wellbeing matters amongst the ELT and promoting a safety-first culture.

Forestry and Land Scotland - National teams structure chart



Delivering our policy

Policy review

This policy has immediate effect and will be reviewed and amended, as necessary.

Kevin Quinlan
Chief Executive
Forestry and Land Scotland
Date: 1st of July 2025



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